



## ***George Washington & Jefferson National Forests***

**Eastern Divide Ranger District**

**110 South Park Drive**

**Blacksburg, VA 24060**

**540-552-4641 or 888-241-6669**

**Release #: (12\_002)**

**Contact: Barbara Walker 540-552-4641**

---

**October 11, 2011**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

---

### **USDA FOREST SERVICE REPORTS ILLEGAL FIREWOOD CUTTING**

**Blacksburg, Va -** The George Washington and Jefferson National Forests have seen a dramatic increase in illegal firewood cutting. Large healthy oak trees, some as much as two feet in diameter, are being illegally cut and removed from the national forest. Cutting dead trees for firewood is allowed throughout most of the national forest with the appropriate permit; however, cutting live trees is only permissible in designated firewood cutting areas on tree marked with green or yellow paint.

In addition to the unlawful removal of live trees, some wood cutters are illegally accessing trees by driving vehicles or equipment off-road into the forest. Others are leaving limbs and tree tops in roadside ditches which prevents proper drainage, often resulting in plugged culverts and damaged roads.

Law enforcement officials have increased patrols and are issuing citations to people who are cutting firewood illegally or driving off-road illegally.

We are asking the public to report illegal firewood activity by contacting the local sheriff's office or the Eastern Divide Ranger District at (888) 241-6669.

**-USFS-**